

Washington, D.C. – U.S. Rep. Vern Buchanan (FL-13) announced today that the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (ACOE) has given final approval to the Project Partnership Agreement to dredge Wares Creek in Bradenton. The ACOE Jacksonville District Commander, Colonel Alfred A. Pantano, Jr., signed the agreement today, just one day after the Manatee County Commissioners met to approve the agreement.

“I applaud the army corps, Manatee County, the City of Bradenton and the Florida Department of Environmental Protection for working together to complete this agreement,” said Buchanan. “I congratulate the people of Wares Creek who have waited decades for this project to move forward and look forward to breaking ground as soon as possible to prevent future flooding in this historic neighborhood.”

In 1986, the federal government made a commitment to work with state, county, and local officials to dredge the flood-prone creek. In 2007, Buchanan brought local, state and federal officials together to work on the project.

The Congressman has secured a total of \$8.5 million to dredge the creek and increased the project’s federal authorization from \$13.8 million to \$42.6 million.

The final agreement had been stalled for seven months in Washington, D.C until last month when Buchanan secured a commitment from the Commanding General of the ACOE Lieutenant General Robert L. “Van” Antwerp that the agreement would be “signed, sealed, and executed.”

“It is reassuring that Congressman Buchanan has shown a steady hand with the Corps, supporting the Board of County Commissioner's efforts to secure a firm commitment from the Corps to get this project started,” said Manatee County Conservation Lands Management Director Charlie Hunsicker. “The Congressman's leadership on this issue has been invaluable.”

For decades, sediment build-up has caused flooding of Wares Creek, an annual average of \$6,700 in damages. The recommended plan would save taxpayer money by reducing the average annual damages by at least 57 percent.

